

MONTANA STANDARDS FOR TRAFFIC EDUCATION

DRIVER EDUCATION

The purpose of the Montana Driver Traffic Education program is to provide structured opportunities for students to learn, acquire, and demonstrate legal, safe driving skills, habits and responsibilities through guided practice for a commitment to life-long driver learning.

Driving is an activity that affects the whole community. A successful program, therefore, requires the effective involvement of parents/guardians, schools, communities and government agencies.

Content Standards indicate what students should know, understand and be able to do in a specific content area.

Benchmarks define our expectations for students' knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors upon completion of the driver education course.

Content Standard 1—Students demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and safe adherence to the basic laws governing driving a motor vehicle on Montana roads.

Content Standard 2—Students act responsibly by demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and safe adherence to the highway transportation system.

Content Standard 3—Students safely and responsibly operate a motor vehicle as required by law.

Content Standard 4—Students articulate and demonstrate the importance of appropriate visual skills for safe operation of a motor vehicle.

Content Standard 5—Students communicate and interact with highway transportation system utilizing effective, safe practices.

Content Standard 6—Students understand and safely apply basic defensive driving principles.

Content Standard 7—Students articulate why it is important to commit to a lifelong learning approach to the driving task.

Content Standard 8—Students demonstrate safe and responsible decision-making skills relative to driving and owning a motor vehicle.

Content Standard 9—Students perform behind-the-wheel driving (BTW) experience under the direction of an approved driver education instructor.

Traffic Education Content Standard 1

Students demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and safe adherence to the basic laws governing driving a motor vehicle on Montana roads.

Rationale

Society expects those licensed by the law will know and abide by the law.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. know the laws outlined in the Montana Driver's manual.
 2. understand the laws outlined in the Montana Driver's manual.
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Traffic Education Content Standard 2

Students act responsibly by demonstrating knowledge, understanding, and safe adherence to the highway transportation system.

Rationale

The highway system consists of the roads, traffic control devices, road information signs and markings, and users. Society expects users to know the system, and to drive consistent with the system.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the highway transportation system.
 2. demonstrate responsible adherence to highway transportation system traffic control devices.
 3. develop habits and attitudes with regard to safe driving.
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Traffic Education Content Standard 3

Students safely and responsibly operate a motor vehicle as required by law.

Rationale

Being able to smoothly operate a vehicle consistent with the law is essential for the safety of the operator and the safety of all other users.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. demonstrate safe operation of a motor vehicle following current traffic laws.
 2. understand responsible operation of a motor vehicle by applying safe driving techniques.
 3. develop habits and attitudes relative to safe and responsible driving.
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Traffic Education Content Standard 4

Students articulate and demonstrate the importance of appropriate visual skills for safe operation of a motor vehicle.

Rationale

Appropriate visual skills are essential to knowing what operational actions are needed to safely operate a vehicle.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. know proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle.
 2. communicate proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle.
 3. demonstrate the use of proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle.
 4. develop habits and attitudes with regard to proper visual skills.
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Traffic Education Content Standard 5

Students communicate and interact with highway transportation system utilizing effective, safe practices.

Rationale

Understanding the information provided by the highway transportation system and its users, and providing appropriate information to other users about the operator's intentions are essential for the order and safety of the system.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. communicate their driving intentions (i.e., use of lights, vehicle and personal signals).
 2. adjust their driver behavior based on observation of highway transportation system and other users.
 3. adjust communication (i.e., use of lights, vehicle and personal signals) based on observation of highway transportation system and other users.
 4. develop habits and attitudes relative to effective communication.
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Traffic Education Content Standard 6

Students understand and safely apply basic defensive driving principles.

Rationale

Defensive driving habits, attitudes and skill are based on the understanding of safe driving principles. It is essential drivers know and follow these principles for the safety of all transportation system users.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. understand basic defensive driving principles.
 2. demonstrate basic defensive driving principles.
 3. develop basic defensive driving habits and attitudes.
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Traffic Education Content Standard 7

Students articulate why it is important to commit to a lifelong learning approach to the driving task.

Rationale

The vehicles and highway transportation system change as technology changes. Skills will deteriorate unless effort is made to keep them honed.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. understand past, present and future vehicle and roadway design, and driving cultures.
 2. describe past, present and future motor vehicle laws.
 3. understand benefits of a lifelong learning approach to driving.
 4. pledge a commitment to a lifelong learning approach to driving.
 5. identify opportunities for lifelong education in driving
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Traffic Education Content Standard 8

Students demonstrate safe and responsible decision-making skills relative to driving and owning a motor vehicle.

Rationale

Carelessness in driving causes injuries and deaths. Society expects drivers to behave responsibly.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. recognize the importance of making safe and responsible decisions for owning and operating a motor vehicle.
 2. demonstrate the ability to make appropriate decisions while operating a motor vehicle.
 3. demonstrate appropriate habits and attitudes regarding other roadway users.
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Traffic Education Content Standard 9

Students perform behind-the-wheel driving (BTW) experience under the direction of an approved driver education instructor.

Rationale

Practice driving is required to obtain safe driving habits.

Benchmarks

Students will:

Upon Completion of Driver Education

1. perform at least the minimum number of BTW hours, as required by law, with an approved driver education instructor.
 2. be encouraged to perform additional BTW driving experience with their parent or guardian's assistance in a variety of driving situations (i.e., night, adverse weather, gravel road, etc.).
 3. Parents or guardians are encouraged to assist their student in performing BTW experience in a variety of driving situations (i.e., night, adverse weather, gravel road, etc.).
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Traffic Education Performance Standards

The Driver Education performance standards describe students' knowledge, skills, and abilities in the driver education content area. These descriptions provide a picture or profile of the students' achievement at the four performance levels-advanced, proficient, nearing proficiency and novice.

Advanced: This level denotes superior performance.

Proficient: This level denotes solid academic performance for each benchmark. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.

Nearing Proficiency: This level denotes that the student has partial mastery or prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient work at each benchmark.

Novice: This level denotes that the student is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for work at each benchmark.

Advanced A student completing driver education at an advanced level demonstrates superior performance. He/She will:

- (a) independently know and adhere to the laws governing driving in Montana as demonstrated by habitually and consistently following the laws while driving.
- (b) independently know and adhere to the highway transportation system as demonstrated by habitually driving consistent with the system.
- (c) independently, and always responsibly, properly and smoothly operate a vehicle.
- (d) independently, and consistently research ideas and opportunities to increase personal knowledge of the vehicle, the highway system, and the driving task.
- (e) habitually know, and always responsibly apply defensive driving principles.
- (f) perform behind-the-wheel driving experience in various environments and road conditions, for a period of time that exceeds the state minimum standards.
- (g) resist peer pressure, which may negatively influence good, responsible driving behavior.

Proficient Students completing driver education at the proficient level demonstrate solid performance. He/she will:

- (a) demonstrate and consistently apply laws pertaining to driving.
- (b) consistently use defensive driving principles.
- (c) demonstrate mastery of safe and responsible driving habits and attitudes.
- (d) perform satisfactorily in obtaining the minimum number of behind-the-wheel hours with an approved driver education teacher.
- (e) consistently interact appropriately with traffic in various driving situations.
- (f) demonstrate basic skills needed to interact safely with the highway transportation system.
- (g) demonstrate appropriate visual skills needed to safely operate a motor vehicle.
- (h) demonstrate habits and attitudes in order to communicate and interact with the highway transportation system utilizing effective, safe practices.
- (i) understand the laws that pertain to owning and operating a motor vehicle.

Nearing Proficiency Students completing driver education at the nearing proficiency level demonstrate partial mastery of the knowledge and/or skills fundamental for responsible and safe driving. He/she will:

- (a) understand that the laws of Montana, counties, and cities can differ.
- (b) demonstrate a limited ability to use defensive driving principles.
- (c) show limited knowledge of motor vehicle laws while driving a motor vehicle.
- (d) most of the time, shows proficiency of safe and responsible driving techniques and attitudes.
- (e) perform in a limited manner after obtaining the minimum number of behind-the-wheel hours with an approved driver education teacher.
- (f) with assistance, can use basic skills needed to interact safely with the highway transportation system.
- (g) with assistance, demonstrate the visual skills needed to operate a motor vehicle.

Novice Students completing driver education at the novice level are just beginning to acquire the knowledge and skill needed for safe and responsible driving. He/she will:

- (a) struggle with traffic in various driving situations, even with assistance.
- (b) rarely be able to use the defensive driving skills.
- (c) have difficulty interacting with others in a safe, courteous manner.
- (d) demonstrate limited understanding of the highway transportation system.
- (e) rarely demonstrate the visual skills needed to operate a motor vehicle.
- (f) show little understanding of the local and state laws of Montana.
- (g) with assistance, have begun to drive in rural, urban, and residential environments.
- (h) have begun to learn signs, signals and pavement markings.
- (i) have difficulty in comprehending and applying vehicle laws while driving a motor vehicle within a supervised environment.
- (j) demonstrate a limited proficiency of safe and responsible driving techniques and attitudes.
- (k) perform at a beginning level after obtaining the minimum number of behind the wheel hours with an approved driver education teacher.